

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 03765 030909Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TO USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7506

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 03765

USICA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: QUESTIONS REGARDING CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
- AFRICA

REF: USICA 9797

1. WHILE REACTION OF MASS MEDIA AND GDR OFFICIALDOM ENTIRELY PREDICTABLE, UNOFFICIAL GDR CONTACTS INDICATE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT AFRICA SITUATION. MASS MEDIA HAVE HAD LITTLE TO SAY ON SUBJECT OF CUBAN ROLE. NEWSPAPERS, RADIO AND TELEVISION HAVE NATURALLY CAST EAST BLOC IN IDEOLOGICAL MOLD OF ANTI-COLONIALIST AND SHOWING "SOLIDARITY WITH LEGITIMATE STRUGGLES OF AFRICAN PEOPLES," WHILE WEST DEPICTED AS IMPERIALISTIC, AGGRESSIVE, ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN COLONIAL HEGEMONY AND ECONOMIC PRIVILEGE IN AFRICA WHILE SUPPRESSING NATIONALIST TENDENCIES. HOWEVER, AS USICA AWARE WEST GERMAN TELEVISION REACHES OVER 90 PER CENT OF PUBLIC AND THUS GDR MEDIA HAS NO MONOPOLY ON INFORMATION. EDUCATED EAST GERMANS HAVE POLITICAL SAVVY TO DISTRUST ALL MEDIA, EAST AND WEST; HENCE THERE IS PUZZLEMENT OVER CUBAN AND SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA, ALSO U.S. PERFORMANCE AND POLICY. IN SHORT, WHILE OFFICIAL VERSION OF EVENTS FOLLOWS STRICT IDEOLOGICAL LINES, INFORMAL CONTACTS SEEM TO HOLD
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NO FIRM OPINION ON AFRICA SITUATION AND FEEL RELIABLE INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INSUFFICIENT FOR REALISTIC EVALUATION OF CUBAN ACTIVITIES, U.S. PERFORMANCE AND CURRENT POSITION, SOVIET ROLE, OR PREFERRED FUTURE U.S. ACTIONS.

2. EAST GERMAN CONTACTS, BOTH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL, ARE

KEENLY AWARE THAT U.S./GDR RELATIONS DEPEND UPON U.S./SOVIET
DETENTE AND ARE CONCERNED THAT EVENTS IN AFRICA MAY UPSET
DETENTE. MANY CONTACTS HAVE IN LAST WEEK EXPRESSED FEAR
THAT NASCENT U.S./GDR RELATIONSHIP BE SET BACK BY SHARP
COOLING OF RELATIONS BETWEEN BIG POWERS, ALTHOUGH GDR
OFFICIALS MAKING EFFORT TO MOVE FORWARD IN DEVELOPING
RELATIONS. ALEXANDER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition History: n/a
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